

Snow or the freezing of still water upsets and, in fact, misses the flight programme of many birds on a sanctuary, but there are some which do not change their daily flight routine. When a noise takes place you get two-way traffic instead of one way owing to the change not being adopted by all—the hour of flight is generally kept the same. Heron are even more punctual and regular in their lighting than duck and geese.

An example of persistence in fighting was that of pack after pack of geese leaving the Hokra preserve near Srinagar from about 8 a.m. till 11 a.m. over the poplar avenue on the main road from Baramulla to Srinagar. It was a common thing to see up to a dozen guns lined up blazing away at the geese going over like formations of air craft. The percentage of hits to snots fired was very low because the birds were practically out of shot and killed only by a chance pellet or brought down owing to a broken wing. Wounded birds were numerous, and there was always a collection of villagers on foot and mounted on ponies on the look out for any that fell in the distance. The reward for retrieving a bird varied with the distance. One brought in by a horseman from a mile or more cost practically the Srinagar game dealer's price. The poplar avenue having become very old and badly affected by borers has been recently cut down opposite Hokra. It will be interesting to see if the geese now go over lower or whether they will still adjust their height to something at which No. 4 shot was irritant rather than lethal.

There is no doubt many shooters are misled. By the way visibility of fighting birds varies from a large number of causes such as the height, speed of flight, amount of daylight still left, cloud, moisture or the air. It is sometimes said any bird you can see fighting is within range. This is most misleading because at one stage of the waning light you see only birds that are a good 100 yards off. Again you kill a bird thought to be a long shot only to find from the density of pellets in it that it was in reality a near shot. It is true that, if you are sitting over a small patch of feeding ground the birds you see as they aught are within shot as also are birds walked up on a feeding ground. It is possible, for instance, to get mallard in this way walking over some very favourite night haunt and taking a snap shot as the bird appears as a black spot for a moment, but this is hardly true fighting. In a true evening flight the shooter has also to take into consideration the varying size of birds, teal low down look much the same as big duck twice as high up.

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR.

G. DE LA P. BERESFORD,

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Major General.

XII.—MOULTING OF DUCK AFTER ARRIVAL IN INDIA.

I was very interested in Miscellaneous Note No. XI in the current issue of the *Journal* (Vol. xlv, p. 300) regarding the moulting of duck after arrival in India since I also came across an instance of this some years ago at a village called Tadunia on the

